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Hair Tissue Mineral Analysis



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Colon Health

Digestion system

The digestive system is very complex. Not only is this where food is broken down and nutrients absorbed, the digestive tract also plays a critical role in the immune system, in ways we still do not completely understand. Some vitamins and other nutrient co-factors are synthesized in the intestines. Also, when elimination is inadequate, the resulting fermentation and putrefaction of food produces toxins that play a significant role in many illnesses. Colon health needs to be addressed in every patient.

Causes of Digestive Problems

Most people today experience some degree of digestive difficulty. Several reasons for this problem include:

- Stressful lifestyles and poor eating habits: Digestion requires parasympathetic activity. Eating on the run, eating when anxious, deficient chewing and eating too fast suppress parasympathetic activity.
- Widespread use of antibiotics: These destroy normal bowel flora. These chemicals are pervasive in our environment - used in human medicine, added to animal feed and residues in all our food and water supplies.
- Candida albicans and other intestinal parasitic infections, such as steroid use, alkaline colons, weak immune systems and copper and other nutritional imbalances also contribute.
- Anti-acid medications: These include over-the-counter anti-acids like Maalox, Mylanta, Gaviscon and Ryopan, alkaline calcium supplements such as Tums and anti-acids like Zantac and Tagamet. All these may impair digestion.
- Diets deficient in zinc and other trace elements: These deficiencies can lead to a reduced production of digestive enzymes.
- Constipation due to stress, low-fiber diets, lack of exercise, improper flora and many medications. This can drastically affect one's health.
- Use of coffee, spices, other stimulants and poor food combinations impair digestion.
- Food sensitivities: The most severe sensitivities are gluten allergies which cause sprue. Many milder food reactions can also impair digestion and elimination.
- With increasing age, digestive enzyme production and bowel motility often decrease.

Hair Analysis Indicators

The following are hair analysis indicators involved in digestion and elimination.

• *Slow oxidizers and those with a low sodium/potassium ratio tend to be deficient in hydrochloric acid.* Sodium is exchanged for chlorine in the intestine to produce hydrochloric acid. Inadequate stomach acid affects the rest of the digestive tract, as it is needed to trigger other digestive secretions. The lower the levels of sodium and potassium, the more pronounced the tendency for low stomach acid.

- Occasionally slow oxidizers may complain of heartburn. This can be due to a hiatal hernia, or production of other acids in the stomach. The procedure with these cases is to slowly introduce dietary aids containing hydrochloric acid and pepsin, or even cider vinegar to the program.

• *True fast oxidizers are more prone to excessive stomach acid.* This is one reason why an enzyme proprietary blend is recommended for fast oxidizers, instead of hydrochloric acid and pepsin. A dietary aid containing no, or low amounts of hydrochloric acid are recommended to fast oxidizers.

• *Copper imbalance, overt and hidden, and mercury toxicity are associated with candida albicans infection.* Copper is the body's natural yeast fighter because it enhances aerobic metabolism. Copper imbalance allows anaerobic organisms to flourish.

• *A low sodium/potassium ratio is associated with an impaired immune system.* This can make one more prone to infection with candida albicans and other intestinal infections. This pattern is also associated with excessive tissue breakdown that may result in ulcers and colitis.

• A high sodium/potassium ratio is associated with inflammation. This may contribute to symptoms such as gastritis, colitis and irritable bowel syndrome.

• *An imbalanced calcium/magnesium ratio is often associated with excessive carbohydrate intake in the diet or impaired carbohydrate tolerance.* This can result in gas, bloating and other digestive symptoms due to fermentation of carbohydrates.

• *Zinc is required to produce digestive enzymes.* A zinc deficiency, evidenced by a low zinc level, a high copper level relative to zinc, hidden copper toxicity, or elevated cadmium may contribute to impaired digestion.

• *A low phosphorus level is associated with impaired protein synthesis.* A low phosphorus level may be due to low zinc, low protein in the diet, or impaired digestion and absorption of protein.

Correction

Improving digestion should be a first priority in every patient. Seemingly unrelated symptoms will improve when digestion and elimination improve. Always ask patients about gas, bloating, constipation, diarrhea, food reactions and abdominal pain.

Simple measures to improve digestion are to avoid acid-decreasing drugs (Tagamet), alkaline calcium supplements like Tums and constipating medication whenever possible.

Use antibiotics only after natural methods such as vitamins A and C, manganese, zinc, copper, echinacea, goldenseal, astragalus, olive leaf extract and colloidal silver have been tried first.

Correct the diet if it is excessive in sugars, carbohydrates, stimulants, too many spices or other damaging foods.

Improve eating habits: Chew each bite 10 times, sit down for meals, and relax at mealtime and for at least five minutes after meals. Reducing liquids at meals and simple food combinations can also help weak digestion.

Lifestyle is very important. Adequate rest, some daily exercise, deep breathing and positive attitudes have a great influence on digestion and elimination.

Supplements

Digestive aids are often needed for a period of time. These include probiotics such as acidophilus products. Quality varies and one product may work better than another. One must usually take several acidophilus capsules per day, preferably before breakfast, for several months.

Digestive enzyme products include hydrochloric acid and pepsin, liver and pancreas enzymes and vegetable-based enzymes. Extra dietary fiber composed of psyllium husks and fruit pectin may be very helpful for some people and may be taken on a long-term basis.

For constipation, extra magnesium is safe, helpful and may be used indefinitely. In addition a product containing black radish root, ox bile and pancreatin is also excellent. It acts on the liver to improve bile production which has a slight laxative effect and helps digestion as well. Cascara sagrada and senna leaves are sometimes used for constipation. However, they can be irritating and habit-forming.

Exercise and deep breathing are also helpful for constipation. Herbs such as aloe and slippery elm are soothing to an inflamed digestive tract. Bentonite and azomite are sometimes used for colon cleansing programs. Use only when needed, as they contain a lot of aluminum. Mechanical procedures such as colonic irrigation, enemas and castor oil packs over the abdomen are excellent to help restore a toxic colon.

The gall-bladder flush with olive oil may also assist digestion and elimination. For heavy infestation of candida albicans, or if someone does not respond to simpler measures, candida may be controlled with caprylic acid, grapses extract, tannic acid or medications like Nystatin and Nizoral. At times, parasite medications or herbs are needed. If heavy infestation with parasites, or candida are suspected, comprehensive stool tests may be helpful.

Other supplements sometimes used to restore the digestive tract include L- glutamine, triglycerides, butyrate and herbs for the liver.

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